

## **Historic, Archive Document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



2.09  
Lee  
SEASON 1917-1918.

# Giant Crimson Winter Everbearing Rhubarb

Written by W. A. Lee



Crimson Winter Rhubarb, less than three months from planting, set 2x5 feet.  
Planted in August, photo taken in middle of November.

The late Mrs. Theodosia B. Shepherd said: "The qualities that make Crimson Winter Rhubarb more valuable to the grower than any other known variety are its **everbearing** habit, wonderful productiveness, that it is at its best during January and February when all fruits are scarce, its **absence of strings so that there is no waste in preparation and no time lost in stringing**. In addition to all this, its flavor is delicious, quite different from the common rhubarb. It does not require so much sugar, and when properly cooked makes as beautiful a dish as any berry on account of its lovely bright red color. People who have never cared for the ordinary rhubarb exclaim on eating this delicious variety, 'Why, this is as fine as any berry I have ever tasted.' Its brilliant color makes it very attractive, entirely different from the green, stringy, mushy varieties to which we have been accustomed, and it soon becomes a standby for the table, like apple sauce, and is called for all through the year, and people do not grow tired of it.

"It is delicious eaten with strawberries, makes a fine filling for short-cake, a beautiful clear syrup for hot cakes, puddings or custards, is fine in cracker pudding; in fact there is no end to the uses for its clear, crimson juice. It has come to stay, for it fills a long-felt want and gives for a low price a delicious dish when all other fruits are scarce and high-priced. For sauces, pies, marmalade, fruitade and wine, jellies, jams, and for blending with other fruits and for canning it is valuable.

"I know of no product the ground can produce that will yield a greater profit with less labor and in a shorter period than 'Crimson Winter' Rhubarb."

For rhubarb culture a deep, rich, mellow soil is best, but I have had it do fine and make a remarkable growth on adobe soil. Have also had fine results on sandy soil that was all used up, by the use of fresh horse and cow manure and dried blood. **The drainage must be perfect.** Rhubarb can be successfully grown between young trees in orchard.

I have never seen any injury to it from insect pests, and it is practically free from disease, although it sometimes becomes spotted in damp, cloudy weather.

It has been grown successfully in various parts of the world where all efforts to grow other varieties of rhubarb had failed. This has been the case in Florida, where C. Fred Ward of Winter Park has grown it for a number of years and says it does fine there and sells readily at 12½ to 15c per pound and demand never satisfied.

In Florida and the other Southern states, growers have experienced the trouble of its dying out in the summer, but Mr. Ward says to use plenty of shade in summer and a good deal of it will live through. Read also Mr. Canada's experience below; he says he has carried his plants through the hottest, driest summer they have ever had in Texas with a loss of only three plants out of ten, simply by covering the plants lightly with hay; his experience should be of untold value to growers in Texas and throughout the South as the same trouble has been experienced in Texas as in Florida and the other Southern states.

In Florida the planting season is in the fall after the heavy summer rains are over, beginning about the last of September or first of October. The earlier it is planted, the sooner it will come into bearing and the larger will be the crop. Planting season in Florida, Oct. 1 to Jan. 1.

Probably it would be best to follow the system of fall planting in Texas and the other Southern states as well as in Florida.

In California the best planting season is March 1 to June 1, but planting can be done as late as the last of August and still get a good crop the following winter.

In California, except in the hot interior valleys, there is no necessity of protecting the plants from the sun in the summer as has been found necessary in the Southern states.

---

## PLANTING AND CULTURAL DIRECTIONS

The ground should be plowed as deeply as possible before planting, the deeper the better. If you manure the ground before planting, spread the manure on the ground before you plow and plow it in.

It is a good plan to set the plants on a very slight ridge. Set them 2 feet apart in the rows and have the rows 5 feet apart. Planted in this way it takes about 4000 plants to the acre. Set the plants in moist earth if possible.

In planting, the entire plant should be set under ground, covering the top with about ½ inch of loose soil, except that any new growth that comes out before planting may be allowed to project above ground. A dibble is the best tool for setting them. Pack the soil **tight** around the roots with the fingers.

Irrigate the same day as planted, letting the water run until the ground is thoroughly soaked clear up around the plants; this is of the utmost importance to insure a good stand.

Keep well cultivated and hoed and irrigate as often as necessary to keep the plants growing vigorously. Keep the seed stalks pulled out as fast as they appear as they sap the strength from the leaf stems and lessen the vitality of the plants; take them out clear down to their base. They should not be cut out, but pulled out, being careful not to pull out any other part of the plant in performing the operation.

Rhubarb needs plenty of fresh manure or fertilizer high in nitrogen, like dried blood, tankage, guano and nitrate of soda.

In applying commercial fertilizers I furrow out on both sides of the row, drop the fertilizer into the furrows, cultivate to cover the fertilizer, and irrigate thoroughly. I have got a fine crop in six weeks by applying dried blood in this way, and in four weeks with nitrate of soda. It is necessary to irrigate thoroughly before the fertilizer will get to work, unless there is a good rainfall.

In applying manure I spread it on the ground between the rows and cultivate in. Save and use all the liquid part of manure possible as this is said to be the most valuable part of it.

Manure is best used fresh; I have been unable to get any results from rotted manure—all the value seems to have been burned or soaked out of it.

### GATHERING AND MARKETING THE CROP

The stems must be put up attractively for market. In pulling the stems, bring away the heel or clasp at the base. Pull them off; do not cut them off. Be careful not to disturb the crown to which the stem is attached, in pulling latter off. Lay them in piles between the rows as you pull them and then go along, or have another man follow up, and cut off the leaves, using a butcher knife, leaving about two inches of the leaf on the end of the stem. As soon as you get a pile cut, cover with leaves to prevent wilting of the stems. The stems for market should be firm, not pithy. Leave the old and undersized stems on the plants as defoliating them too much gives them a set-back. As a rule a crop can be gathered every four or five weeks if forced along. For home use, much oftener.

For market I pack in boxes 2 feet long inside, holding 30 to 35 lbs. I line the boxes with attractive paper; the paper helps keep the rhubarb fresh.

### WAGNER'S GIANT CRIMSON WINTER

This is a greatly improved strain of the Crimson Winter, and is the best that I know of that is grown to any extent commercially.

It is a true everbearing strain and very productive, producing stems in abundance of fine quality, large size and attractive color, the color being at its best in winter and spring, especially winter, but rather green in summer and fall.

The plants bear few seed stalks compared with the old Crimson Winter, the latter being very bad about sending up numerous seed stalks.

The stems are firm and not inclined to become pithy unless they become quite old or are severely frosted. I always found that the old Crimson Winter produced a great many pithy stems.

Unlike the old Crimson Winter, which Burbank says will not live through the winter where ice forms over one inch in thickness, the plants of this strain are said to live through the winter in very cold climates, although of course it will not grow in very cold weather.

The only way to get this, or any other strain, to come true is by subdividing, as rhubarb will not come true from seed.

This is the variety I am growing commercially and I now have 8 or 9 acres planted to it. Subdivisions are the only thing I will plant, except for experimental purposes, and I strongly advise others to plant only subdivisions, as they are uniform and so superior to seedlings, which are not uniform at all.

From November 28, 1913, to June 10, 1914, from  $\frac{5}{8}$  of an acre of Wagner's Giant subdivisions set out in June and July, 1913, I shipped 675 30-lb. boxes, receiving for same \$673.70.

The following is from the Southland Farmer (Texas), page 12, Aug. 1, 1917, and is by the editor, J. W. Canada, in an article entitled, "My Garden." Mr. Canada got these plants from me in Nov., 1916; he lives in La Porte, Texas:

#### CRIMSON WINTER RHUBARB

"Of course it is out of season for this now. Last fall I prepared a bed deep and rich. It was spaded as deep as I could go, a cart load of well rotted manure put in and a dozen plants set. Two of them died. The others began to grow early in the spring. Two cold snaps cut back to tops. I really should have covered them, but neglected to do so. Next year I shall do so. It means early rhubarb. Each time new leaves came out promptly, and soon were big enough to eat. The stems were about the thickness of one's thumb.

"These ten plants, occupying a bed about three by six feet, furnished an abundant supply for our use all the spring. In fact, I cut off enough twice a week to keep us supplied with rhubarb for pies and for table use. Nor is there anything more appetizing or healthful in the spring than rhubarb. It is a tonic and blood purifier. It should be on every table two or three times a week throughout the early spring.

"Many people have told me that they could grow rhubarb in the spring but could not carry it through the summer. When the hot weather came, it just died, even when it was covered with barrels so as to exclude the sun. I did



not cover the bed with barrels or lattices either. **I merely threw a light mulch of hay over it, and the leaves have grown right up through this and not a plant has suffered.** If the crowns were not protected from the hot sun they would probably die. This mulching of hay is all that I have found necessary.

"Rhubarb is a heavy feeder and much manure must be furnished it. So a short time ago a two-inch layer of well rotted manure was thrown over this mulching, and in the fall another coating of manure will be put on. The rhubarb is a plant that likes the cold, and the main thing that must be done to keep it alive and growing for us is to keep it well manured and to furnish it some protection against the hot weather. The slight covering of hay is all that I have found necessary."

Under date of September 4, in reply to a letter from me, Mr. Canada writes me as follows: "I have lost three of the rhubarb plants through the hot weather the past few weeks. Now that rains have come the others are starting to grow in fine shape. They will grow right on this fall, I presume. Anyway, I have demonstrated that the plants can be carried through the hottest, driest summer we have ever had."

### LOCAL RHUBARB GROWER AWARDED GRAND PRIZE

"W. A. Lee, a well known orchardist of this city, received word this week from the Southern California Exposition Commission that he had been awarded a grand prize for his exhibit of "Giant Winter" Rhubarb at the Panama-California International Exposition at San Diego.

"Mr. Lee has been an extensive grower of rhubarb for several years, for which he finds an ever-increasing market, and his pack is universally recognized as the finest in the market."—COVINA ARGUS, Oct. 6, 1916.

### SUPER-RHUBARB PIE

One cup sugar, large tablespoonful flour mixed with the sugar, butter the size of an English walnut, one egg. Mix all together, add two cups finely chopped rhubarb and bake in two crusts. (Two eggs can be used for three pies.) This makes a wonderfully delicious pie.

**Do not peel this rhubarb** as it does not require it.

### PRICE LIST OF PLANTS WAGNER'S GIANT (Subdivisions)

6 postpaid .....	\$ 1.50
12 postpaid .....	2.50
100 express collect .....	8.00
1000 express collect .....	60.00
5000 express collect .....	275.00
10000 express collect .....	500.00

These subdivisions are **very fine** and are sure to give satisfaction if planted and cared for according to directions. They weigh in the neighborhood of 300 lbs. to 350 lbs. per 1000, packed for shipment. They cannot be duplicated elsewhere for quality, quick maturity and production the first season.

**Send your order in early** so as to avoid possible delay in getting it filled. Better get your neighbors to join you in an order and so **get the benefit of the lower rate for larger quantity.** Every family should have some plants for home use at least, but better still, **plant more and get the benefit of the high prices it brings in the market.**

It takes 4000 plants per acre, set 2x5 feet. A crop can be picked 3 or 4 months after planting.

Send all orders and make all remittances payable to

**W. A. LEE, Grower**  
Covina, California